

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 KADUNA 00289 061308Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

/059 W

-----125026 061706Z /64

R 061201Z MAR 78

FM AMCONSUL KADUNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3913

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMCONSUL IBADAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L KADUNA 0289

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, NI

SUBJECT: IYA ABUBAKAR ON CONSTITUTION AND POLITICALS

1. SUMMARY: DR. IYA ABUBAKAR, VICE CHANCELLOR OF AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY (ABU) AND MEMBER OF CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY (CA) CALLED ON PO RECENTLY AFTER CHECKING OUT SOME USIS BOOKS ON AMERICAN POLITICS AND ELECTIONS. HE AND PO HAD RELAXED AND FAIRLY FORTHCOMING DISCUSSION OF CA, DRAFT CONSTITUTION AND POLITICS GENERALLY. ABUBAKAR SEES TECHNICAL PROBLEMS AS LIKELY IN 1979 ELECTIONS; FEELS THAT ELECTION REGISTRATION PROCESS WENT WELL IN RURAL AREAS, HOPES FOR COMPROMISE ON SHARIA COURT ISSUE, WOULD LIKE TO SEE AUTHORIZED RENEWAL OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY EARLIER THAN PLANNED AND SUPPORTS CLOSER US-NIGERIAN RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. PO EXPRESSED SOME SURPRISE THAT ABUBAKAR WAS SEEKING MATERIALS ON PRESIDENCY AND ELECTIONS IN US, SAYING HE THOUGHT CA HAD BASICALLY SETTLED THESE MATTERS. ABUBAKAR SAID YES, BUT THAT THERE WAS POSSIBILITY ASSEMBLY WOULD HAVE TO TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT DECISIONS ALREADY MADE IN THESE AREAS. HE INDICATED SOME CONCERN AT FACT THAT, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 KADUNA 00289 061308Z

AS THINGS NOW STAND, THREE SETS OF ELECTIONS WILL BE NECESSARY IN 1979. THIS, HE OPINED, WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT AND COMPLICATED EXERCISE AFTER 13 YEARS OF NON-POLITICS. PO OUTLINED BRIEFLY OVERLAPPING NATURE OF US ELECTORAL PROCESS WITH VOTERS SELECTING PRESIDENT, HOUSE, SENATE, STATE AND SOMETIMES LOCAL OFFICIALS ON SAME TRIP TO POLLS. ABUBAKAR SMILINGLY SAID THAT APPEARED EVEN MORE

COMPLICATED THAN THREE ELECTIONS NOW ENVISAGED FOR NIGERIA.

3. WHEN ASKED HOW HE THOUGHT SHARIA PROVISION IN DRAFT CONSTITUTION WOULD FARE, ABUBAKAR REPLIED HE THOUGHT THERE WOULD BE A COMPROMISE ALTHOUGH HE COULD NOT BE SURE AS NO ONE HAD BEEN TALKING ABOUT THAT ISSUE AT THE CA SINCE BEFORE CHRISTMAS RECESS. HE AGREED WITH PO OPINION THAT ISSUE HAD GENERATED TOO MUCH HEAT. HE SAID THAT PERSONALLY, THOUGH A MUSLIM, HE DID NOT FEEL THAT A SEPARATE FEDERAL SHARIA COURT WAS NECESSARY.

4. PO ASKED WHO ABUBAKAR SAW AS EMERGING NORTHERN CONDIDATE FOR PRESIDENCY, SAYING THAT HE HAD HEARD THAT CIROMA AND BAMALI HAD ASSUMED SOME SORT OF SPOKESMAN ROLE FOR NORTH IN INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS IN LAGOS. ABUBAKAR EXPRESSED SURPRISE AT MENTION OF BAMALI AND SAID THAT A GROUP OF FIVE ASSEMBLYMEN FROM NORTH HAD BEEN SELECTED AS QUASI-CAUCUS LEADERS. THE FIVE ARE ABUBAKAR HIMSELF, SHETTIMA ALI MUNGONO, CIROMA, MARCUS YARKASUWA GOKADUNA STATE) AND EMMANUEL ATANU (BENUE STATE). HE SAID HE DID NOT REALLY SEE ANYONE FROM THE NORTH AT THIS STAGE EMERGING AS CLEAR-CUT PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. (HE WAS OBVIOUSLY NOT INTERESTED IN DISCUSSING NAMES OF POSSIBLE NORTHERN CANDIDATES.) HE SAID AWOLOWO WAS CLEARLY CAMPAIGNING FOR THE TOP SVTT.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 KADUNA 00289 061308Z

5. PO HAZARDED OPINION THAT IT SEEMED TO HIM UNLESS FMG LIFTED LID ON POLITICAL ACTIVITY TO SOME DEGREE SOON, BUDDING POLITICAL PARTIES WOULD HAVE GREAT DIFFICULTY IN ORGANIZING THEMSELVES PROPERLY FOR '79 ELECTIONS. ABUBAKAR AGREED EMPHATICALLY SAY THAT QUESTION

OF INTERNAL PARTY ELECTIONS OF LEADERS, FORMULATION OF PLATFORMS, SELECTION OF CANDIDATES, ETC. WILL TAKE A LOT OF TIME AND EFFORT. PO ASKED WHETHER ABUBAKAR FORESAW THE RE-EMERGENCE OF REGIONALLY BASED PARTIES AS IN PRE-MILITARY GOVERNMENT PERIOD. HE CAUTIOUSLY AGREED THAT THIS WAS LIKELY SAYING THAT MIDDLE BELT WAS CLEAREST EVIDENCE OF THIS TENDENCY; HE SAID THAT MEETINGS OF CUS BEING HELD IN JOS HAD ONLY BENUE AND PLATEAU STATE PARTICIPANTS. PO REPLIED THAT THIS SURPRISED HIM A BIT AS HE HAD BEEN INCLINED TO SEE A SOMEWHAT LARGER MIDDLE BELT CONSTELATION, INCLUDING GONGOLA, BAUCHI, NIGER AND SOUTHERN HALF KADUNA STATE. ABUBAKAR DISAGREED WITH INCLUSION IN MIDDLE BELT OF THESE EXCEPT EXTREME SOUTHERN PART OF KADUNA STATE'S ZARIA EMIRATE. HE SAID THAT BAUCHI, NIGER AND GONGOLA WERE STILL NORTHERN IN ORIENTATION BECAUSE OF

RELIGION IN SAME WAY THAT BENUE/PLATEAU COMBINATION WAS
PRIMARILY BASED ON RELIGION. HE ALSO COMMENTED THAT
KWARA, TO THE EXTENT IT IDENTIFIED WITH ANY GROUP,
APPEARED TO BE WITH THE OLD NORTH AT CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

6. PO ASKED HOW ELECTION REGISTRATION WAS GOING IN GONGOLA,
FROM WHICH ABUBAKAR HAD JUST RETURNED. HE SAID THAT THINGS
WERE GOING WELL AND THAT THE PROBLEMS ON WHICH THE PRESS
HAD FOCUSED WERE LARGELY THOSE OF URBANIZED AREAS.

7. COMMENTING ON BILATERAL RELATIONS ABUBAKAR SAID HE
WAS VERY FRIENDLY TO THE U.S. AND, WHILE GLAD THAT BILATERAL
RELATIONS WERE WARMER THAN THEY HAD BEEN, FELT THAT THEY
WERE STILL NOT AS "HOT" AS THEY SHOULD BE. HE ADDED THAT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 KADUNA 00289 061308Z

DURING HIS VISIT TO THE US LAST AUGUST HE HAD TOLD
NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON THAT HE SHOULD WORK TO
IMPROVE RELATIONS. ABUBAKAR SAID HE HAD CALLED UPON
HEAD OF STATE OBASANJO AFTER THE LATTER'S VISIT TO
THE US TO CONGRATULATE HIM ON HIS INITIATIVES AND EXPRESS
HIS SUPPORT FOR THE IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS WITH THE US.
PO SAID THAT HE TOO WAS PLEASED THAT THINGS HAD IMPROVED
SO MUCH OVER DIFFICULT TIMES OF TWO YEARS AGO BUT THAT THERE
WAS CERTAIN BUILT-IN POTENTIAL FOR DIFFICULTIES, I.E.,
HIGHER EXPECTATIONS ON NIGERIAN SIDE TOWARD SOUTHERN
AFRICAN ISSUES THAN US COULD ALWAYS MEET. ABUBAKAR
AGREED THAT THIS WAS POTENTIAL PROBLEM. PO SUGGESTED THAT
UPON HIS RETURN TO LAGOS (WEEK OF FEBRUARY 27) HE MIGHT
FIND IT INTERESTING TO CALL IN ON AMBASSADOR EASUM WHO FOLLOWS
SOUTHERN AFRICANS ISSUES CLOSELY. ABUBAKAR SAID HE MIGHT
DO SO IF HIS SCHEDULE PERMITTED.
BURKE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978KADUNA00289
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780100-1040
Format: TEL
From: KADUNA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197803103/aaaadjrt.tel
Line Count: 153
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d934f8b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3109272
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: IYA ABUBAKAR ON CONSTITUTION AND POLITICALS
TAGS: PGOV, NI, (ABUBAKAR, IYA)
To: STATE LAGOS
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d934f8b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014